

# **BLACKSTONE/FRANKLIN SQUARE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**

## **Minutes for its meeting of March 20, 2018**

D4 Police Station Community Room,  
650 Harrison Avenue, Boston, MA 02118

**Convened at 7:05 PM**

### **Welcome and Announcements: 7:05 PM**

Vadim Kuksin reported that City of Boston Community Preservation Act director Christine Poff has agreed to attend our May meeting and present on the CPA process.

### **Record Keeping: 7:06 PM**

Matt Mues gave the Treasurer's Report: The BFSNA operating balance is \$9,068.62. The Scholarship Fund account balance is \$65,167.22. The Friends of Blackstone and Franklin Squares account balance is \$24,944.46.

The tree sale yielded a profit of \$4,100, which ranks 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> best ever. The Heart of Gold fundraiser raised \$33,521.22, which is among the most ever. Scholarships will be awarded on June 19, 2018.

### **Mobile Sharp Program presentation and Q & A: 7:07 PM**

Devin Larkin, Bureau Director, Boston Public Health Commission Recovery Services & Sarah Mackin, Director of Harm Reduction Services, BPHC Bureau of Recovery Services spoke and took questions about the City's Mobile Sharp program.

The mobile sharp program began three years ago in the South End and now operates citywide. It provides coverage from 7 AM to 4 PM seven days a week, with three staff. There are plans to hire a fourth staff person and extend coverage to 7 PM. The team responds to reports received via BOS311 app and the 311 phone line and also conducts pro-active sweeps to collect syringes in known hotspots. The team receives up to 15 to 20 reports/calls per day; the South End has been particularly active in utilizing the service.

BPHC operates a needle exchange and recovery service that has a 116% return rate: it issues 6,000-plus needles per week and receives back 7,000-plus (the difference being that mobile sharps accepts needles that were acquired elsewhere, in addition to the ones it has provided).

The team has seen ebbs and flows in the South End. Mass. Ave., Melnea Cass, parks and squares, and alleys that are out of sight are ongoing issue areas.

The City currently maintains five outdoor syringe kiosks: secure boxes where used syringes can be safely deposited for later collection, including one in the South End at 35 Northampton Street. A sixth kiosk is to be installed at Orchard Gardens. The City is currently assessing adding more kiosks, with expansion somewhat contingent on both sufficient resources to service the boxes and identification of appropriate locations.

### **Public Safety report:**

**7:26 PM**

D4 Community Service Officer Francis reported that past weeks have been relatively quiet in the area. He noted the fact of a robbery on Shawmut Avenue involving a purse and explained that assaults shown on a crime report he distributed were largely associated with instances where Boston Medical Center public safety officers were struck by individuals being placed under arrest.

The potential move of the BMC public safety department to the former Cumberland Farms location at the corner of Mass. Ave and Harrison Avenue was touched on, as was the transfer of the Lenox/Camden housing developments from the Boston Housing Authority to Beacon Communities, which is to redevelop and manage them.

### **Boston 311 service presentation and Q & A:**

**7:30 PM**

Elizabeth Torres, Staff Assistant for Boston 311, spoke and took questions about the City's 311 service.

311 is an information center that exists to help answer questions about City services generally and field and respond to specific issues or complaints. It does not itself resolve issues or complaints but directs these to whichever City department can do so. It can be accessed in four ways: by phone (dial 311 within Boston); via the BOS311 app; through its website ([boston.gov/311](http://boston.gov/311)); or via Twitter.

City of Boston Office of Neighborhood Services liaison Faisa Sharif said residents should be aware that 311 is useful as a way to ensure concerns are logged and tracked, which is helpful to demonstrating how the City should budget and prioritize resources.

**South End Forum update:  
7:48 PM**

Vadim Kuksin gave an update on some items of interest from March's South End Forum meeting, as follows:

1. **Alexandria Hotel:** The tentative sale of this property to a certain developer has stalled and the owner has placed it back on the market. The would-be developer continues to explore how and if a viable deal and project can be structured.
2. **South End Library:** The library has launched a capital campaign for improvement of the small park located next to its building (and is planning a second campaign to help fund interior renovations). The current goal is \$115,000, of which some \$50K has been raised/committed to date. BFSNA will be making a donation—which is expected to be in the amount of \$1,000—and we encourage others to support this worthy cause.
3. **Massport Community Advisory Council:** State Rep. Aaron Michelwitz's legislation giving the South End a permanent seat on the Massport Community Advisory Council (responsible for advising the state and the legislature on Logan airport operations) has passed the House and is under consideration by the Senate. This is important as the South End experiences a great deal of noise from aircraft at Logan yet has had no representation on this body.

**Other matters:  
7:56 PM**

ONS liaison Faiza Sharif said she wanted to call attention to two items: (a) A public meeting on April 12<sup>th</sup> to discuss long-term plans and improvements for Tremont Street (such as to address pedestrian safety); and (b) the ongoing process to identify and select sites for expansion of the Hubway bicycle share service (an open house is to be held on March 28<sup>th</sup>).

**Adjourned at 7:59 PM.**

Elected officials or their representatives in attendance:

Boston City Councilor Annissa Essaibi George  
Faiza Sharif, Office of Neighborhood Services, City of Boston